The Start Button

Microsoft Windows XP

Introduction to the Windows XP Start Menu

The following pages will give you a basic understanding of the Windows XP Start Menu. We will touch upon topics such as:

- Adding items to the menu
- Changing the style of the menu
- Displaying programs in the menu
- Shortcuts for accessing the most frequently used programs from the menu

Read on to become acquainted with key tasks that are now possible through the new, streamlined Windows XP Start Menu….

If you have any questions or concerns about this lesson, please send an email to pomeroy@ky.gov

The Start Button is the first button on the toolbar (looking left to right). Normally, it will be located in the lower left-hand corner of your display. It can also be located in the upper left-hand corner or the upper right-hand corner if the toolbar has been repositioned.

Clicking on the Start Button opens up the Start Menu. The Start Menu provides access to features and programs that are on your pc. Windows XP also allows you to choose one of two Start Menu designs. The default menu is shown to your left. The other menu available is the Classic Start Menu (as shown in the Windows 2000 Start Menu tutorial).

To access these choices, place the mouse pointer on the Start Button and right-click. This will open a box for you. Move the mouse pointer until the word Properties is highlighted, then left-click. The Start Menu options box will then open.

The XP Start Menu (left) is divided into two sections. These sections contain the most frequently used programs and the pinned items list. We'll go through these after we explore the Log Off/Shut Down section (located at the bottom of the Menu).

Log Off

The Log Off option (upper left) at the bottom of the Start Menu is also available in the Shut Down menu. However, there is no difference in the function. Just think of the Log Off option as a shortcut. Either Log Off will simply log out the current user and bring up the sign in screen.

Shut Down

The options available through Shut Down are seen by Using the Drop Down arrow to the right. Position the Mouse pointer on the box and left-click. The following choices will then appear:

- ❖ **Log Off** - Same as above

- ❖ **Shut Down** - Closes all applications and turns off the computer.

- ❖ **Restart** – Closes all applications, turns off the computer, then immediately restarts the computer.

Now, let's explore the Start Menu beginning with the upper left-hand portion (outlined in red) of the menu. The programs contained there are referred to as the Pinned Items list. They will remain there and always be available for easy access. You can also pin additional programs to the list if you want.

Pinning items to the Start Menu

- Right-click on the program you want to display on the Start Menu. You can right-click on a program from Start Menu/All Programs, using Windows Explorer, in My Computer, or on the Desktop.

- Choose Pin to Start Menu to display the program.

To Unpin the item from the Start Menu, simply right-click on the program and choose Unpin from Start Menu. The order in which the items are displayed can be changed by clicking and holding the left-mouse button while dragging the item to the desired location.

*Please note that you cannot pin or unpin items using the Classic Start Menu.

The items (red box) in the next group are referred to as the Most Frequently Used Programs List. Programs are added to this list as you use them. The number of programs displayed is already set by default. When the displayed number is reached, the program you have not opened recently is replaced by the last one opened and so on.
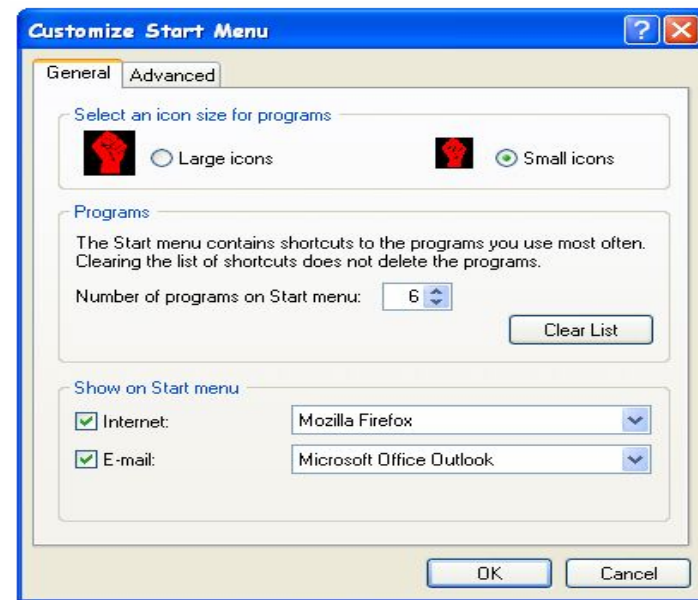However, the number of programs displayed can be changed.

To do this right-click on the Start Button and choose Properties.

Click on the Customize button (see menu to the right).

General Tab Options
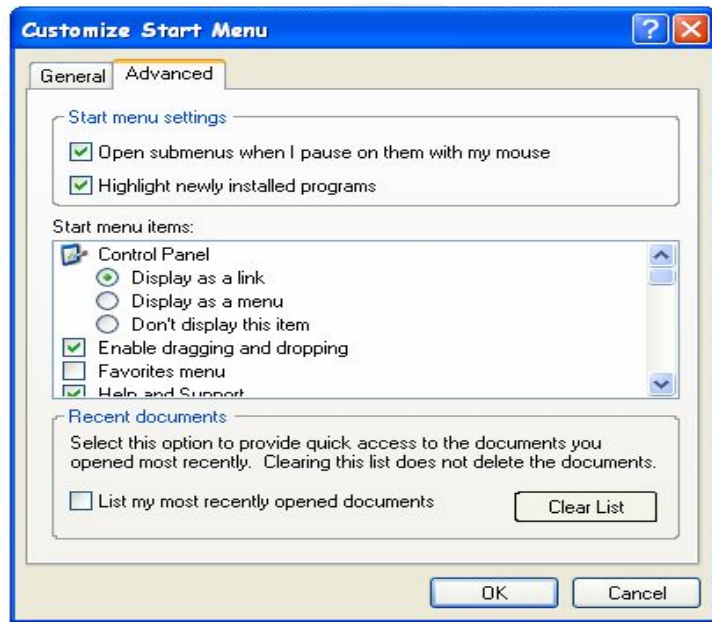
❖ The size of the icons displayed can be changed here. The two choices available are Large and Small.

❖ The number of program shortcuts shown on the start menu can be changed as well. The Clear List button will remove the program shortcuts but does not delete the programs.

❖ Another option available is to show your internet and email on the Start Menu. Place a check in the box and choose from the drop down box to the right. This will place the internet and email shortcuts in the upper left-hand corner of the Start Menu.

Advanced Tab Options

❖ Start Menu Settings
To change the way All Programs opens from the Start Menu, select the box for Open submenus when I pause on them with my mouse. The next time you click Start and point to All Programs, it will bring up a the list.

❖ Checking the next box-Highlight newly installed programs- will automatically highlight any new programs you have recently installed.

Advanced Tab Options (continued)

❖ Start Menu Items

Any of these items can be added to the Start Menu.

Just select the ones you want (choose Display as a link) and click OK. The next time Start is clicked, the selected items will appear on the menu. These items will become Pinned items and will always be available from the Start Menu.

Following is the list of items available for adding to the menu:

Recommendations for adding to the menu are marked with an *.

Control Panel*	My Pictures
Enable dragging and dropping*	Network Connections
Favorites menu	Printers and Faxes*
Help and Support**	Run Command*
My Computer*	Scroll Programs
My Documents*	Search*
My Music Set	Program Access and Defaults
My Network Places	System Administrative Tools

❖ Recent Documents

Checking this box will display the most recently opened documents (such as text documents, pictures, office documents, etc.) Placing the mouse pointer on the arrow to the right of My Recent Documents will show the list.

*The Clear List button will clear out the list, but will not delete the documents.

For more detailed information on Start Menu items and their functions, please go to the Help and Support option. It will provide step-by-step instruction on all aspects of Windows XP. Enjoy!